



EAR
project

**Current situation
of citizenship education
(Report – Work Package 2)**

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1. Introduction

This report summarises the results of a comparative analysis about the current situation of citizenship education in five Countries, namely Greece, Italy, Portugal, Spain (Catalonia) and United Kingdom (England). The situational analysis, in the framework of EAR project, aims at: 1. Identifying the needs of target groups (teachers and adolescents) and challenges/constraints related to citizenship education; 2. Adapting the methods according to the emerging needs and challenges or constraints identified.

The report is mainly based on the situational analyses carried out by the EAR Partners on their respective education systems through the adoption of a common descriptive framework and some guidelines provided by the University of Florence. At national level each Partner collected all the relevant information requested through desk research and some interviews with primary and/or secondary school teachers. In each Country at least 6 teachers were interviewed and overall the sample consists of 34 teachers (6 in Greece, 7 in Italy, 9 in Portugal, 6 in Spain and 6 in UK). Furthermore, this report includes also some findings from a more comprehensive research study carried out by EACEA, namely *Citizenship Education at School in Europe - 2017*¹.

The report is divided in four main sections:

- a) Curriculum organisation, programmes and conceptual framing of citizenship education
- b) Pedagogical approaches and teaching/learning methods for citizenship education
- c) Teacher education and professional development for citizenship education
- d) Challenges and constraints of citizenship education from teachers' perspective

Finally, the report ends with some conclusions in which the main findings are further synthesized and their implications for the implementation of EAR project are highlighted.

¹ https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/citizenship-education-school-europe-%E2%80%93-2017_en

2. Curriculum organisation, programmes and conceptual framing of citizenship education

Citizenship education is part of the national curricula for general education in all countries. In examining the organisational aspects of citizenship education curricula we identified three approaches, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Citizenship education may be provided as a cross-curricular theme, or as a separate subject, or also it may be integrated into other subjects or learning areas. Approaches to the integration of citizenship education into national curricula can change from Country to Country, as well as from an education level to another (see Table 1).

Table 1 – Approaches to the integration of citizenship education into the national curricula

	Cross-curricular theme	Integrated into other subjects	Separate subject
Greece (GR)	Flexible zones of creative activities, cross-curricular activities (<i>primary and lower secondary school</i>) Embedded in the general objectives (<i>upper secondary school</i>)	History, religious education, Greek language and literature, ancient language, science, physical education (<i>lower secondary school</i>)	Social and civic education (<i>primary school</i>) Civic education (<i>secondary school</i>)
Italy (IT)	Citizenship and Constitution embedded in general objectives (<i>primary and secondary school</i>)	History, geography (<i>primary school</i>) History, law and Economics (<i>secondary school</i>)	
Portugal (PT)	Citizenship and Development embedded in general objectives (<i>primary and upper secondary school</i>)		Citizenship and Development (<i>lower secondary school</i>)

Spain (ES)	Embedded in the general objectives as Social and Civic Competence (<i>primary and secondary school</i>)	Spanish language and literature, first foreign language, Geography and history, mathematics, Philosophy, Spanish history (<i>secondary school</i>)	Education for citizenship (<i>3rd year of secondary school</i>) Ethical-civic education (<i>4th year of secondary school</i>)
United Kingdom (GB)	Embedded in the general objectives (<i>primary and secondary school</i>)		Citizenship (<i>only in some secondary schools</i>)

In Greece and Spain the three approaches are combined but in Spain citizenship education is taught as a separate and optional subject only in the third and fourth year of the secondary school (age 14-16).

In Italy, Portugal and UK (England) two approaches are adopted simultaneously, though in different ways. In Italy “Citizenship and Constitution” is a cross-curricular theme and a topic integrated into other subjects, both in primary and secondary school. In Portugal, instead, “Citizenship and Development” is embedded in the general educational objectives (cross-curricular approach) and it is also a separate subject addressing secondary school students (age 10-14). Finally, in the UK citizenship education is embedded in the national curriculum as general objectives and it is also a subject named “Citizenship” that applies only to state maintained secondary schools. Other non-maintained schools (including primary schools) can decide whether or not to teach the subject, as well as the approach to deliver it.

In all Countries citizenship education clearly foresees general or specific objectives not only in terms of the knowledge students should acquire, but also in terms of skills to be mastered, attitudes and values to be developed and a disposition to be engaged with civic issues. Indeed, in all Countries citizenship education is far more than simply teaching students about a country's constitutional structure.

Overall, most national curricula tend to reflect the multi-dimensional nature of EACEA conceptual framework . This latter consists of four broad citizenship competence areas and several related specific competences to foster: 1) interacting effectively and constructively with others (self-confidence, cooperation, empathy, communicating and listening, intercultural skills); 2) thinking critically (reasoning and analytical skills, knowledge discovery and use of sources, media literacy, understanding the present world, questioning); 3) acting in a socially responsible manner (respect for justice and human rights, solidarity, sustainable development, enviromental protection, non-discrimination); 4) acting democratically (respect for democracy, knowledge of political istitutions and processes, Knowledge of fundamental political and social concepts; Knowledge of or participation in civil society). For this perspective, generally the national curricula recommend the development of several competences related to interacting effectively and constructively with others, critical thinking, adopting socially responsible behaviours and democratic action. Nevertheless, national curricula are not equally comprehensive in this respect and in some contexts some areas of competence are more valued than others. Specifically, the curricula in

Greece, Italy and Spain encourage the development of the all four areas of competence. For example, in Spain the Secondary School Curriculum² includes the transversal competence called Social and Civic Competence that is defined as the ability to understand the social reality in which one lives, to face conflicts using ethical judgments based on values and democratic practices, to exercise citizenship by contributing to the construction of peace and democracy and to fulfil civic rights and obligations. In Portugal and in UK, instead, some competences are not particularly considered in the national curricula. Specifically, Portugal seems to give much less attention to the knowledge and understanding of institutions and fundamental political concepts to act democratically, while the UK does not promote explicitly the communication and the cooperation with others as a key objective of citizenship education, at least in the national curriculum.

Beyond the formal organisation of citizenship education in the national curricula, in all Countries several programmes, initiatives and strategies (or action plans) support – directly or indirectly -the implementation of citizenship education at school through curricular and extra-curricular activities (see Appendix A).

Overall, such programmes cover a wide and very comprehensive range of topics, addressing the fundamental principles of democratic societies, contemporary societal issues such as cultural diversity and sustainable development. For example, the thematic week in Greece aims at educating and raising awareness among members of the school community with respect to five basic themes: Democratic Coexistence and Human Rights, nutrition and quality of life, prevention of addiction and drug abuse, gender identity, driver education and road safety³. Similarly, in Italy the National Plan for citizenship education and education to legality⁴ supports interdisciplinary educational projects on one or more topics among the following: a) active citizenship education and respect of rules; b) membership of European Union and of other international organisations and cultural exchange; c) solidarity and volunteering; d) knowledge of the territory and enhancement of the artistic and cultural heritage; e) educational (re)use of venues confiscated to criminal organisations from the State; f) promotion of legality's culture and sense of belonging to the community. Generally, such programmes are very consistent with the objectives indicated in the national curricula.

On the other hand, in all Countries excepting Spain several initiatives narrow on some specific issues. For example, in Portugal the programme CUIDA-TE⁵ funds different initiatives approaching youth health and healthy life style, while the so-called Prevent strategy⁶ in UK is intended to build young people's resilience to radicalisation. Even the initiatives more focused on specific issues usually align with the development of one or more competences included in the national curricula. In this respect, the Jigsaw⁷ method in UK, with its strong emphasis on emotional literacy, social and employability skills and spiritual development, represents a notable exception because, as highlighted above, the national curriculum in the UK loosely refers to the effective and constructive interaction with others. Hence, in this

² https://eacea.ec.europa.eu/national-policies/eurydice/content/spain_ro

³ <http://www.iep.edu.gr/el/thematiki-evdomada-category/content/129>

⁴ <https://bit.ly/2ONeEd4>

⁵ <https://juventude.gov.pt/SaudeSexualidadeJuvenil/ProgramaCUIDATE/Paginas/programa-cuida-te.aspx>

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protecting-children-from-radicalisation-the-prevent-duty>

⁷ <https://www.jigsawpshe.com/>

specific context the Jigsaw programme allows teachers in the UK to work also in this area of competence that is not particularly valued in the national curriculum. Furthermore, these examples of more specific initiatives suggest how some initiatives can frame very differently citizenship education. In this regard, the most emblematic case is the UK in which Jigsaw's method strongly differs from the Prevent strategy dealing with violent radicalisation. Similarly, a project about the promotion of legality's culture in Italy will probably embody a quite different understanding of citizenship education compared to a project about solidarity and volunteering. Hence, sometime the emphasis on the different areas of competence depends also on the specific programme at stake and not exclusively on the national curriculum.

3. Pedagogical approaches and teaching/learning methods for citizenship education

In this section we look at whether education authorities in the five examined Countries provide guidance on teaching and learning citizenship education and, specifically, how this guidance translates into the pedagogies and practices used in the classroom. All education systems in our study give some methodological guidance on teaching citizenship education at school. Education systems provide guidance and support materials for citizenship education as part of their national curriculum or as manuals (or syllabuses), which often offer both pedagogical guidance and insight into appropriate teaching and learning practices.

In Spain the secondary education curriculum does not establish specific methodological orientations for the development of the competence in citizenship, but it provides some basic methodological guidelines based on the principles of constructivism in teaching and learning, particularly referring to problem-based learning. The lack of more specific guidelines depends on the recognition of the autonomy of the centres and the teaching staff to apply those specific teaching and learning methods that they consider more appropriate for the context and the conditions in which they operate.

The national curriculum in Greece⁸, instead, strongly connects the general objectives of teaching Greek language and literature with citizenship education. From this perspective language education is a crucial means of participation in the social and cultural life of the Country, as well as of respect of different languages and cultural values. Furthermore, experiential learning is widely promoted through the educational interventions carried out by NGOs such as Antigone, Arsis and Memento on different citizenship education related topics (gender identities, human rights and democratic coexistence).

In Portugal, the National Strategy for education for citizenship⁹ comes along with the training module "Citizenship and Development"¹⁰ in which project-based learning is prescribed within a wider whole school approach. This latter involves addressing the needs of learners, staff and the wider community, not only within the curriculum, but across the whole-school and learning environment. It implies collective and collaborative action in and by a school community to improve

⁸ <http://ebooks.edu.gr/new/class-main.php?classcode=DSGYM-%CE%91>

⁹ http://www.dge.mec.pt/sites/default/files/Legislacao/2017_despacho_64.pdf

¹⁰ http://www.dge.mec.pt/sites/default/files/ECidania/Docs_referencia/modulo06_cidadania_e_desenvolvimento_mooc.pdf

student learning, behaviour and wellbeing, and the conditions that support these.

Similarly, in Italy whole-school approaches are encouraged through the last school reform (2015)¹¹, to promote a cohesive, collective and collaborative school model. Each school is free to establish cooperation with families, local communities and different stakeholders, including public authorities, businesses, NGOs and communities. Although less explicitly, (or systematically) the whole school approach is recommended also in the other four Countries. Backing to the Italian context, new ways of organizing teaching and learning are recommended, methods to foster the active role and participation of students are also encouraged, especially in the Circular letter 86/ 2010¹². Finally, in the UK some basic methodological guidance is embodied in the Jigsaw learning scheme¹³ through which a whole-school approach and practices of active learning are promoted.

In sum, generally in all education systems a “student-centred” approach to the teaching of citizenship education is explicitly or implicitly recommended. Such pedagogical approaches are usually based on teaching and learning methods that are (inter)active, relevant (that is, focused on real-life issues facing young people and society), collaborative and participative. However, although a “student-centred” approach seems more privileged in the education systems examined in this report, in some respects also a more “teacher-centred” approach to citizenship education is implicitly contemplated across some contents of the citizenship education curricula (see Section 2 and Appendix A). For example, this can be seen in the emphasis on the knowledge that students should acquire about the functioning of the political system in their own Countries, especially in Italy and in the UK. Another instance of knowledge that teachers are required to provide to the students consists of some fundamental texts (e.g. Universal Declaration of Human Rights, Greek Literature, Italian Constitution) aimed at transmitting democratic values such as equity, tolerance, solidarity, social justice, etc. Furthermore, the five education systems are moving towards a whole school approach to citizenship education, especially in Italy and in Portugal where this approach seems more supported at policy level than in the other Countries.

This synthesis of pedagogical approaches and methods outlined above strongly resonates with the findings from the analysis of the interviews with teachers. Indeed, in all Countries all interviewees claimed to teach citizenship education through a variety of methods that clearly fall into a more general “student-centred” approach. Overall, teachers consider this approach much more effective than a teacher-centred approach relying exclusively on direct instruction and individual practices of learning. Conversely, teachers find more productive the active methods focusing on experiential, interactive and/or problem-based learning. Interestingly, in the experience of some interviewees in Greece and in the UK these teaching methods contemplate the use of theatrical techniques.

¹¹ <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2015/07/15/15G00122/sg>

¹² <https://www.orizzontescuola.it/circolare-ministeriale-n-86-del-27-ottobre-2010/>

¹³ <https://www.jigsawpshe.com/>

3. Teacher education and professional development for citizenship education

This section concentrates on the policies adopted by the five Countries to promote teachers' professional competences for citizenship education and provide them with relevant education, training and support. Top level regulations or recommendations that aim to promote the development of specific competences for teaching citizenship education during Initial Teacher Education (ITE) among all future teachers exist only in Spain. Here ITE of secondary school teachers is done through a master's degree¹⁴. In this course Citizenship education is mainly integrated in the subject "Society, family and education". The focus is on developing knowledge of human and children's rights but also on the skills and attitudes relevant for teaching citizenship education, particularly referring to teachers' ability to create appropriate learning spaces, develop tolerance and deal with the challenges related to the diversity of students, including cultural, religious and value-based diversity. Reference is also made to the skills needed to encourage communication and discussion, especially about current social issues as well as for handling conflicts and promoting co-existence. Another crucial competence related to engagement with students, parents and the local community includes building effective relationships and working in teams in school and with the education community, school partners, parents and, more generally, the local community. In Portugal, instead, despite the absence of regulations or recommendations during ITE, the national body responsible for the accreditation of study programmes for ITE (*Avaliação e Acreditação do Ensino Superior*) verifies that the citizenship component is present in the areas covered by the courses. Italy¹⁵ and the UK¹⁶ – also have top level regulations or recommendations that aim to promote the competences of all teachers through ITE but their focus is not specifically on citizenship education related competences but rather on the general pedagogical skills that can also be beneficial for the implementation of citizenship education. The main emphasis is on the development of teachers' subject-specific knowledge as well as teaching and learning methods (such as encouraging cooperation and learning in groups), but not on their attitudes and values. In Italy special attention is given to the promotion of inclusive learning. Another recurrent element in both education systems' recommendations is the ability to work in teams and establish partnerships in schools, with parents as well as with other stakeholders in the local community. In addition, in the UK, a citizenship-specific qualification – the 'Professional Graduate Certificate in Education/ Postgraduate Certificate in Education in Citizenship (PGCE)¹⁷ – is available, but not taken up by a huge number of prospective teachers¹⁸.

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and other support measures for teachers in the field of citizenship education exist in four Countries (GR, IT, PT, ES) out of five. In these education systems, CPD is considered a professional duty but it is only recommended or optional.

¹⁴ <https://bit.ly/2L8HFQJ>

¹⁵ <https://www.gazzettaufficiale.it/eli/id/2015/07/15/15G00122/sg>

¹⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teachers-standards>

¹⁷ <https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/citizenship/gcse/citizenship-studies-8100>

¹⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/initial-teacher-training-allocations-for-academic-year-2015-to-2016>

Generally, the competences for teaching citizenship education to be developed during CPD cover the knowledge of the citizenship education curriculum, objectives and content; teaching skills and methods appropriate to citizenship education; the ability to engage with students, parents and the local community; and the ability to reflect on and improve practice and performance, etc.

In Greece, the Institute of Educational Policy provides teachers with specific programmes and educational material to address the citizenship education related topics during the Thematic Week. In Italy the coordination of CPD activities for teaching professionals is ensured through the National Plan for Teacher Training¹⁹ through which the Ministry of Education establishes the priorities for teacher training, allocates the resources, monitors the outcomes of activities and establishes agreements with providers of the training itself. The plan defines nine national thematic priorities, including citizenship education, as well as more general competences, such as developing effective relationships between schools and families, strengthening professional competences and attitudes to facilitate mutual understanding, peer education and education and career guidance.

In Catalonia (Spain), the Department of Education presents its CPD programme in the training section of the The Catalan Electronic Education Network (XTEC)²⁰. The training is delivered in different ways. Through the online platform teachers can share their resources and experiences made at school, as well as to access to several educational initiatives, for example projects in which participants work on the real needs of their environment in order to improve it (community service) and counselling and orientation activities focused on interculturality and social cohesion and inclusion.

In Portugal, with of the recent launch of the National Strategy for Education for Citizenship, the General Directory of Education provides a training course to the Coordinators of the School Strategy. The training was provided only for a set of teachers selected by the schools, nevertheless, some School Training Centers structured or are structuring training to introduce the strategy and work on the methodology behind the strategy also with other teachers. The training course provides an overview of the whole school approach and how it can be integrated into the Education Strategy for Education for Citizenship in school; theory and practice related to project-based learning, to actively involve students in all phases of project design and implementation; an introduction to the different frameworks already available in Portugal to approach different topics related to citizenship education, specifically environmental education, consumer education, financial literacy, education for security, defence and peace, education for development, media education and education for health.

Our interviews with teachers suggest that, despite in all Countries ITE or CPD on citizenship education is recommended, only a minority of teachers attended the aforementioned (or others) training programmes. In our sample about 33% of teachers (11/34) attended specific training programmes on citizenship education. Among our interviewees about half of trained teachers concentrates in Portugal, where six interviewees out of nine attended the course “Education for Citizenship: from theory to practice” - in the beginning of the school-year. Nevertheless, this finding cannot be interpreted

¹⁹ http://www.istruzione.it/allegati/2016/Piano_Formazione_3ott.pdf

²⁰ <http://xtec.gencat.cat/ca/inici/>

as a national trend, once that the majority of the teachers interviewed are also Coordinators of the School's Strategy of the Education for Citizenship and according to the Portuguese National strategy of education for citizenship, the training is mandatory to these professionals and recommended (not mandatory) to the professionals acting as a citizenship teacher, only.

4. Challenges and constrains of citizenship education from teachers' perspective

This section presents nine main themes identified through a thematic analysis of teachers' answers to the question "What are the main challenges to teaching citizenship?". Interestingly, despite the question was about the challenges, most of the emerging themes correspond to specific constrains, rather than challenges, to teach citizenship education at school. This is evident from the nine themes identified, namely 1. Tensions between school democratic ethos and external influences; 2. Limited (teaching) resources; 3. Time constrains to implement citizenship education; 4. The evaluation issue; 5. Lack of teachers' training on – and confidence with – citizenship education; 6. Marginality of citizenship education; 7. Teachers' workload; 8. Gap between the intended democratic curriculum and the educational practices; 9. Ideological dilemma: democratic empowerment or indoctrination?.

4.1 Tensions between school democratic ethos and external influences

About one third of interviewees (8/34) across all Countries, with the exception of Portugal, pointed to a gap between school democratic ethos and external influences (family, media, society) as a major challenge to teach citizenship education.

According to several teachers the gap consists of a tension (when not an opposition) between the fundamental values underpinning the citizenship education curriculum (e.g. democracy, tolerance, equity, anti-discrimination, etc.) and the values that circulate in students' proximal contexts. In this regard, some teachers highlighted how the seemingly dominant values in contemporary society prevent their educational action. For example, one teacher in Spain describes such constrain as the difficulty to "make students socially responsible citizens in a society with little solidarity". Most of the time teachers identify more precisely such external influences with students' family and the media. Even in these situations teachers emphasise the distance between the inclusive model of citizenship that they seek to promote at school and the implicit model of "exclusive citizenship" conveyed by some parents and media narratives, especially with respect to the inclusion/exclusion of people with migrant background. In some cases, instead, in Greece and in Italy, teachers indicated a gap between their own engagement with teaching democratic values and a widespread disengagement among parent in this regard. Here, the issue at stake is not an opposition of values but rather a lack of political socialisation of students within their family environment.

4. 2 Limited (teaching) resources

In Greece, Portugal and Spain several teachers (8/34) complained the lack of appropriate resources to teach citizenship education. Some teachers focused on the limitations of the teaching resources available, specifically the textbooks and/or the curriculum in Greece and the syllabus in Spain. Interestingly in both Countries teachers pointed to the

detachment of the educational materials from students' interests and experiences. Indeed, according to the interviewees, this explains why many students find monotonous or irrelevant the contents of the classes. Other teachers in Portugal and in Spain, instead, observed how the lack of material resources such as technology and feasible spaces represents a further obstacle to carry out effectively the classroom activities. For example, in Portugal one teacher referred to the lack of digital devices and of a well functioning Internet connection at school whilst another one to the absence of an appropriate location in which students can present their citizenship education projects to the whole school community.

4.3 Time constrains to implement citizenship education

Many interviewees (6/34) in Portugal and Spain indicated the limited time dedicated to citizenship education as a strong constrain to an effective teaching. In general, teachers consider the duration of the citizenship education classes insufficient (i.e. 1 hour per week), especially because of the complex topics addressed during the classroom activities and the active and participatory methods employed. In addition, in Portugal where a project-based learning approach is implemented, teachers lamented also the lack of time to prepare the classes, as well as to manage the project in cooperation with other teachers.

4.4 The evaluation issue

For several teachers (5/34) in Greece, Italy and Portugal the evaluation of citizenship education is particularly challenging in two main respects. On one side, some teachers in Greece and Italy observed how the lack of any assessment of students' citizenship competences risks to make the "subject" irrelevant, especially from students' point of view. On the other side, in Portugal some teachers underlined the need to update the guidelines to assess students' learning in relation to the new subject of "Citizenship and Development", which foresees also students' self-evaluation.

4.5 Lack of teachers' training on – and confidence with – citizenship education

Some interviewees (5/34) in Greece, Portugal and UK pointed to the generally scarce preparation of many teachers with respect to teaching citizenship education. Usually the unpreparedness is explained as a consequence of teacher training lack, especially in terms of pedagogical strategies to teach citizenship education. In one case, instead, one teacher in Greece highlighted intercultural training as a particularly important aspect to cultivate.

4.6 Marginality of citizenship education

In each Country with the exception of Greece at least one interviewee (overall five teachers) stated that citizenship education has a marginal position in the teaching practice at school. Three teachers (one in Italy and two in Portugal) explained how the cross-curricular **and subject** integrated approaches to the integration of citizenship education in the curriculum can obstacle its effective delivery. For example, some teachers stated that such approaches, when concretely implemented, reduce teachers' responsibility to teach citizenship education. Furthermore, a Portuguese teacher

suggested that the coordination among teachers - that is crucial within a cross-curricular approach - is very challenging because teachers tend to give the priority to their own core subjects rather than to citizenship education. Other two teachers (one in Spain and one in the UK), instead, brought back the marginality of citizenship education to a lack of political interest in the subject and in its development.

4.7 Teachers' workload

In some cases (4/34) in Greece, Portugal and the UK, teachers explicitly referred to a workload characterising their profession and how this negatively impacts on their teaching in general and on citizenship education in particular, especially in the school systems (or schools) where this subject is not compulsory. In this regard, a British teacher observed that the core subjects are always privileged over citizenship education.

4.8 The gap between the intended democratic curriculum and the educational practices

One teacher in Greece and two in Italy highlighted a lack of integrity in the implementation of citizenship education at school, that is the gap between the democratic values embedded in the curriculum and the ethics behind the actual educational practices. The teachers explained this lack of integrity by referring to the school environment itself since the latter would not encourage any kind of empathy or social awareness or it would not recognise pupils and adolescents as citizens.

4.9 Ideological dilemma: democratic empowerment or indoctrination?

Three teachers (two in Greece and one in Portugal) shed light on an ideological dilemma that arises when teaching citizenship education. The dilemma translates into a question that teachers seem to ask themselves: does citizenship education genuinely promote democratic empowerment of students or does it represent just another form of indoctrination?

In this regard, both Greek teachers mention a sort of "post-ideological hypocrisy" characterising the education system. Indeed, citizenship education should not address political parties matters or politically controversial issues but, at the same time, this prescription could translate into a selective practice of censorship through which some more conservative (when not reactionary) ideologies (i.e. nationalism and fascism) can be easily promoted by some teachers. For example, according to one teacher, this process of ideological censorship can be seen in how many teachers avoid teaching more recent history (e.g. World War II and the Civil War), as well as to use political terms such as socialism and communism. The Portuguese teacher, instead, raises the ideological dilemma by focusing on teacher's difficulty to keep his/her own personal values/beliefs without translating citizenship education into a practice of indoctrination.

5. Conclusions

This report shows that citizenship education is embedded all Countries' education systems but the approaches to its integration into the national curricula are often different. Some general objectives related to citizenship education are present in all national curricula at all education levels. Portugal is a notable exception in this respect, as this cross-curricular approach does not apply to lower secondary school where citizenship education is a separate subject, like in Greece for all education levels and Spain for students attending the third and the fourth year of secondary school. In addition, in three education systems (i.e., Greece, Italy and Spain) citizenship education is also integrated into other core subjects although in Greece this applies only to lower secondary schools. Overall the analysis of the curriculum organisation across the five Countries suggests that the importance of citizenship education is generally recognised everywhere but it also reveals some blind spots in its delivery, notably in the UK where the subject "Citizenship" is present only in State secondary schools that are progressively diminishing. Moreover, from the analysis of teachers' interviews it emerged that often citizenship education remains marginal when compared to other core subjects, especially in the Countries and in the education levels where it is not a compulsory subject.

However, our analysis clearly indicates the presence in all Countries of a number of programmes and initiatives to support the implementation of citizenship education at schools through curricular and extra-curricular activities. This implies that when citizenship education is not formally guaranteed at policy level, the EAR educational interventions can be delivered anyway within specific programmes and initiatives that align with EAR's educational objectives.

Generally, in all Countries national curricula tend to be broad in scope covering most of the competences related to democratic and socially responsible action, critical thinking and inter-personal relations. Hence, overall EAR's conceptual framework for citizenship education is perfectly compatible with the current understandings of citizenship education in all five educational systems. Nevertheless, we also demonstrated that some citizenship education curricula and programmes (or action plans) tend to privilege some areas of competence rather than others. These differences should be taken into account when the EAR project will be introduced and proposed to the educational staff, for example by emphasising how EAR's educational approach covers the areas of competence that are particularly valued in the national curriculum or in a specific action plan within which the educational interventions will take place.

Moving to the recommended pedagogical approaches and teaching/learning methods, our analysis shows that all Countries provide some kind of methodological guidance on how to teach citizenship education at school, for example general guidelines or syllabuses respectively embedded in the national curriculum and in specific programme and initiatives through which citizenship education can be implemented. Nevertheless, the findings from the interviews suggested that the teaching resources available are often unsuitable to connect with students' interests and life experiences. Although only some teachers in Greece and Spain pointed out to this limitation, it seems useful to remember this constrain when developing the EAR's guide in order to find appropriate contents and pedagogical strategies to cope with it.

Consistently with EAR's methodology, in all education systems a "student-centered" approach to the teaching of citizenship education is widely privileged compared to a "teacher-centered" approach. Hence, the (inter)active and socially situated methods of teaching and learning embedded in EAR's methodology strongly align both with current

policy recommendations and with the methods that teachers, according to the results of the interviews, consider more effective to teach citizenship education. However, since these active methods usually are time-consuming and many teachers often lack the time to teach citizenship education (see Section 4), EAR's methodology should seek to promote the use of relevant and active methods within time constraints experienced by teachers.

As for teachers' training, our analysis suggests that a systematic Initial Teacher Education (ITE) focused on citizenship education is absent in all education systems with the exception of Spain, whilst teachers in almost all Countries have more opportunities to train themselves through several initiatives during their Continuing Professional Development (CPD). Nevertheless, since everywhere both ITE and CPD are only optional the training of teachers still represents a major challenge in all education systems. This is further confirmed by the results of the interviews as only a minority of teachers attended specific training programme to teach citizenship education in the classroom. In this context, EAR project with its focus on teachers' training represents a concrete opportunity to meet existing teachers' needs, both as ITE when addressing pre-service teachers and as CPD when involving in-service educational staff.

Two further challenges emerged from the interviews with teachers deserve to be mentioned here in order to develop at best EAR's methodology, namely the gap between school democratic ethos and external influences (family, media, society) and the contradiction between intended democratic curriculum and the educational practices. In this regard, EAR educational approach should allow students to reflect critically on their own immediate contexts, including the school environment.